



## **Moorlands School**

### **RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY**

References:

- A: [The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2014](#)
- B: ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools : Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements – September 2022
- C: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- D: [Charities and Risk Management \(CC26\), 2010](#)

This policy supplements the Health and Safety Policy Statements which set out the activities to be assessed and responsibilities for assessments.

#### **WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?**

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation.

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property)
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, preliminary visits, warning signs, barriers and insurance).

Risk assessments can be used to identify the potential hazards to people (slipping, falling), property (fire), strategic (reputation, loss of pupils, impact on development), financial (falling pupil rolls), compliance (child protection issues) and environmental (asbestos, Legionella).

#### **WHY HAVE RISK ASSESSMENTS?**

The obvious answer is that risk assessments are a legal requirement. Inspectors will expect to see examples. But there is logic to this. By focussing on prevention - as opposed to reacting when things go wrong - it is possible to prevent accidents and injuries that could ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Preventative measures can often be surprisingly simple and cost-effective, such as the application of hazard warning tape to a trip hazard, or ensuring that chemicals are properly stored in locked containers.

## WHAT AREAS REQUIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS?

There are numerous activities carried out in the school, each of which requires its own separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety, procedures and risk assessments
- Educational visits and trips
- EYFS settings

Separate model documents cover each of the three areas mentioned above. However, risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including:

### Educational

- Science experiments
- Design and Technology/Art
- Food Technology/Cooking
- Each sport and PE activity
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Drama

Within the schools, we make use of model or generic risk assessments for our educational activities and visits. All teaching staff and technicians receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments.

### Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral policy is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young child capable of keeping him/herself safe on the streets, in the home and in all situations. Our PSHE programmes and Assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupil develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken.

### Medical and First Aid

Risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures are in place. The accident forms are maintained in the school office and the First aid co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Bursar and deputy head. The School's separate medical policy explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency.

### Child Protection

Our Child Protection policies and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. Safer recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children, and are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors and volunteers on site, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular child protection training, we manage this risk to an acceptable level.

### Support Areas

- **Catering and Cleaning:** risk assessments and training are required for catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- **Caretaking and Security:** risk assessments cover every room, laboratory, stairs, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school, including the Nursery. Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising the risk of both fire and to security by adhering to good practice. Risk assessments also cover manual handling, working at heights, and asbestos. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- **Maintenance:** risk assessments and training is required for tools and items of equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, asbestos, control of contractors on site, electricity, gas, water, swimming pool maintenance and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment.
- **Grounds:** risk assessments and training is required for tools and pieces of machinery, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- **Office staff:** risk assessments are required for the display screen equipment and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

#### Access by Pupils

Risk assessments of all areas of the school reinforce the policy of ensuring that our pupils do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool, the science laboratories and the art room. Doors to these areas are kept locked when not in use. Pupils are only allowed access when accompanied by a member of staff. Pupils do not have access to the Grounds, Maintenance, Catering and Caretaking working areas in the school.

#### CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT

The blank proforma for the conduct of risk assessments is at Annex A to this policy.

Consideration to be given to the people, including age and any SEND requirements.

On completion of the risk assessment, the residual risk score is coloured coded as follows:

High - scores of above 13

Medium - scores of 7-12

Low - scores of 0 -6

Our policy is never to carry out any activity which have high risk scores above after the risk reduction measures have been put into effect. Activities involving our youngest pupils will only be carried out if they can be awarded a residual score of 12 or below.

Example:

- A hazard that is highly likely but is of low residual rating. For example

The probability of a coach in a city being stuck in traffic would be rated as 5

The severity of leaving teachers, teaching assistants and children waiting outside in hot sun/wet weather for an unknown period of time would be rated as 2.

The initial risk score would be 10.

But putting all of the following measures in place reduces its severity to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 5:

- Teacher in Charge and Driver are in mobile phone contact
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and discovered where the party can wait out of the rain/sun
- Bottled water is carried
- All staff carry visit packs, and can phone the school to advise that there will be a delayed return
- All parents' emergency contact details are available to the School Office, who phones them and explains that the coach has been stuck in traffic; but there is nothing to worry about
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand
  
- A hazard may be fairly likely and have a low residual rating. For example:

The probability of a child falling over and grazing a knee on a walk in the countryside would be rated as 4.

The initial severity would be 2.

The initial risk score would be 8

But putting the following measures into place reduces the severity to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 4:

- Teacher in Charge has First Aid kit
- One member of staff is qualified in Paediatric First Aid
- Teacher in Charge has mobile phone
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand
  
- A hazard may be very unlikely; but have a high severity rating. For example:

The probability of a child going missing on an organised school outing headed by a qualified Teacher, who has been trained in leading visits, and was appropriately staffed would initially be rated as 3.

The severity would be 4.

The initial risk score would be 12.

But putting the following measures into place reduces the probability to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 4 (Green):

- All children have been briefed about the purpose of the visit and the expectations of behaviour
- All children understand where they should go if they accidentally become separated from the rest of the group
- Teacher in Charge and other staff and volunteers carry mobile phones
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and planned the route inside the location (e.g. museum) in advance
- Children are divided into groups of 4 each supervised by one member of staff, assisted by a volunteer

- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment and the Missing Child Policy beforehand
- All members of staff know what to do in an emergency
- All volunteers have been briefed thoroughly on their respective roles.
- All children are wearing school uniform and are readily identifiable
- Head counts are taken on leaving the classroom, on sitting in the coach, on leaving the activity and on returning to the coach. The coach does not leave until everyone is accounted for.

The three examples quoted above are intended to illustrate that everyday risk assessments for school outings are no more than practical tools that are designed to assist teachers who are in charge of an outing. The issues:

- What if the coach is delayed?
- What if a child falls over and injures him/herself?
- What if a child goes missing?

can arise, and need to be anticipated in advance. However, conducting risk assessments on EYFS outings does not require specialist knowledge.

### **Medium Risk Activities**

We undertake a few medium risk activities with older pupils, such as riding, skiing, skating, swimming in open water, and orienteering; but only using specialist/qualified instructors. Some of the scientific experiments carried out by our pupils also have a residual medium risk rating. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment, such as mouth-guards, and to follow instructions.

Support staff may carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.

### **Specialist Risk Assessments and High Risk Activities**

We will always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks at the school. The Bursar arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety of buildings
- Work at high levels

### **REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENTS**

All risk assessments should be regularly reviewed; but the EYFS Statutory Framework requires schools which provide for this group to review and update their risk assessments annually. It also specifically requires providers to have risk assessments in place covering their indoor and outdoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys and to keep records of these checks.

Risk assessments should also be reviewed (and recorded), when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident. The school's arrangements for the management of health and safety should describe the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for auditing the catering and cleaning functions and for water sampling.

We maintain a "library" of risk assessments on our staff intranet for staff to refer to and adapt for their own use. Copies can also be found in the School Office.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF**

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety (which is recorded). Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. However, staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head Teacher, the Bursar and other members of the SMT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar, or Senior Caretaker.

## **ACCIDENT REPORTING**

The Bursar is responsible for ensuring the reporting and recording any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR). All notifiable accidents and near misses are reviewed by the school's Health and Safety Committee with a view to assessing whether any measures need to be taken to prevent recurrence.

## **AUDIT COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS**

An annual compliance risk assessment is presented by the Headteacher to the Governors to approve and forward to MIST at the same time that they review the audited accounts. This report analyses:

- The financial procedures and controls
- The major risks to the school, including:
  - Strategic risk
  - Loss of fee income
  - Damage to reputation
  - Failure to teach the correct syllabus
  - Risk of a child protection issue
  - Gaps in Governor skills
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Employment disputes

- Major health and safety issues
- Possible data loss
- Risk of fire, flood and land slip
- Poor cash flow management
- Fraud
- Loss through inappropriate investments
- Areas of potential risk
- The measures taken to protect the school against such risks, including:
  - Safer recruitment of staff, Governors and volunteers
  - Measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff and Governors
  - Insurance
  - Strong financial controls that are regularly reviewed
  - Financial reserves policy
  - Use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc as needed
  - Formal review of compliance with the school's charitable objectives

Governors are invited to approve the compliance risk assessment annually and to endorse the insertion of a statement along the following lines (or a more detailed version thereof) in the school's annual accounts:

EITHER: "The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Trust, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks".

OR: "The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks.

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Position: Bursar

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